



U.S. Immigration  
and Customs  
Enforcement

# News Release

August 9, 2005

## **OWNER OF ORANGE COUNTY IMMIGRATION CONSULTING FIRM RECEIVES 30 MONTHS FOR FILING HUNDREDS OF FALSE VISA PETITIONS**

SANTA ANA, Calif. — The owner of a now-defunct immigration consulting firm was sentenced here today to 30 months in prison for submitting hundreds of fraudulent visa petitions and for money laundering.

Nuruddin Shaikh, 47, of Norwalk, was sentenced late Monday by United States District Judge Cormac J. Carney, who remanded the defendant into custody immediately after sentencing. Shaikh's co-defendant and former partner, Naveed Akhter, 41, of Huntington Beach, was sentenced by Judge Carney on June 6 to a term of 41 months in federal prison. Both Shaikh and Akhter face deportation from the United States after they serve their sentences.

The charges against the two men stem from an investigation by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) with assistance from the U.S. Department of Labor, the United States Postal Inspection Service, and the Criminal Investigation Division of the California Employment Development Department. The original lead in the case came from the Fraud Detection Unit of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services.

Shaikh and Akhter operated an immigration consulting firm known as Reachworld, Inc., which was doing business under the name of "Reach USA." Reachworld's offices were located in Fountain Valley, California.

Akhter and Shaikh filed the fraudulent petitions to obtain visas for hundreds of aliens seeking to come to, or stay in, the United States. Akhter and Shaikh filed the fraudulent petitions ostensibly on behalf of employers who needed to hire alien workers to fill construction and computer programming jobs. The alien customers of Reachworld were listed on the petitions as the workers that the employers wanted to hire. In fact, the petitioning employers were fictitious entities created by Akhter and Shaikh, and the alleged jobs did not exist.

During the course of their scheme, Akhter and Shaikh filed more than 200 fraudulent petitions containing statements that they verified falsely under penalty of perjury. The petitions were filed with the California Employment Development Department and the United States Department of Labor.

### # ICE #

*U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of five integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.*